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C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 000647

SIPDIS

NSC FOR MGREEN
DEPARTMENT FOR EAP/ANP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/30/2014

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SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND MINISTER HOSTS MIKE MOORE'S
"FAHRENHEIT 9/11" FUNDRAISER (ALMOST)

Classified By: DCM David R. Burnett

1. (SBU) Embassy Wellington learned July 30 that GNZ Cabinet Minister for the Environment Marian Hobbs was reportedly hosting a special screening of Michael Moore's controversial movie "Fahrenheit 9/11" as a local Labour Party fundraising event. DCM contacted the Prime Minister's office to ask whether it could shed some light on the matter and was told by PM office staff that they were not aware of the issue but would look into it. DCM then contacted Minister Hobbs' office but the Minister's office declined to make her available to discuss the matter. Hobbs' staff later informed Embassy that Hobbs would not be hosting the fundraiser. However, she would be attending the event.

2. (C) COMMENT: There's a reason this particular Minister is nicknamed "Boo Boo" Hobbs. That said, it is probable that this potential fiasco may only have been averted because of our phone calls - it is apparent to us that neither the Minister nor anyone else in the Labour government seems to have thought there was anything wrong with a senior Minister hosting such an event. Ambassador will use a scheduled meeting with the Prime Minister to tell Clark of the near instantaneous press queries for USG comment in this matter and remind her that we would really rather not get dragged into internal NZ political issues, such as Ministerial fundraising events for Clark's Labour Party.
Swindells